GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK'S MT. MORAN
KEN CANNING

An Ecosystem to Experience
Yellowstone and Beyond

Several years ago, I was fly-fishing with a buddy in backcountry Yellowstone. The dusk sky turned Technicolor and the temperature dropped as the sun slipped behind the mountains. The stream cut deeply into the terrain so tall banks obscured the view both ways. We could smell something musky, and suddenly there was an explosive splash no more than 20 yards upstream around the blind corner. A moment later, the current filled with feathers, a slick of blood, and pieces of a duck. My friend and I exchanged glances. We never saw the bear. All that remained were evidence of his kill and his tracks. We were reminded this was his neighborhood, and we were the guests and that was as it should be. And how this place was intended to be.

Think about a region so awe-inspiring that after having seen it in 1871, the members of the Hayden Expedition sat around a campfire near the Madison River and conceived of an entity both audacious and visionary: A "National Park." By 1872, it was called "The National Park." It was one of America's greatest ideas and gifts to the world: 2.2 million acres containing 10,000 thermal features, spectacular geological diversity, and native wildlife in stunning numbers. The park's creation launched a concept that has spawned thousands of national parks in countries around the world, including its dramatic sister park, Grand Teton.

My first of more than a hundred visits to Yellowstone took place when I was a child in the 1960s when bears begged tourists for food instead of hunting it in the backcountry. Things have changed since then and the wildness has returned. Wolves are back and restorative fires are allowed to burn. We neighbors think it's still America's best national park.

—C.J. Box, novelist, Wyoming

CASTLE GEYSER, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WY
SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Notable National Parks

Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks lie at the heart of this region's 36 million acres, and anchor its rich legacy of conservation. Greater Yellowstone holds some of the country's first designated wilderness areas, and among its seven national forests, Wyoming's Shoshone was the country's first.

"Grand Teton National Park is a place of simple beauty. Sometimes the least complicated activity rejuvenates our spirits the most, like skiing under the moon reflecting off the snow, marveling at night turning into day, or watching the mountains light up from top to bottom at sunrise. You might feel alone on top of a peak, but at any moment an insect might crawl from beneath a rock, a moose could wander by, or an eagle might soar overhead."

—Elizabeth Maki, Moose District Interpreter, Grand Teton National Park

"In 1872, Yellowstone became the world's first national park. The story-telling art of interpretation began here, as hotel staff and stagecoach drivers gave guided tours to curious visitors. "Geyser gazers" hung out at the geothermal spots, exchanging detailed observations for tourist tips. We still have geyser gazers today, sitting in floppy hats on hot summer days, logging geyser behavior into notebooks, and chatting with visitors, though no longer for money."

—Lee Whittlesey, historian, Yellowstone National Park

BIG MIKE, OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM
MUSEUM OF THE ROCKIES

MUSEUM OF THE ROCKIES, BOZEMAN, MT
Dinosaurs of a feather flock together in the paleontology section, where researchers first deduced that the extinct creatures were ancestors of modern birds.

ABSAROKA-BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS, MT
DONNIE SEXTON

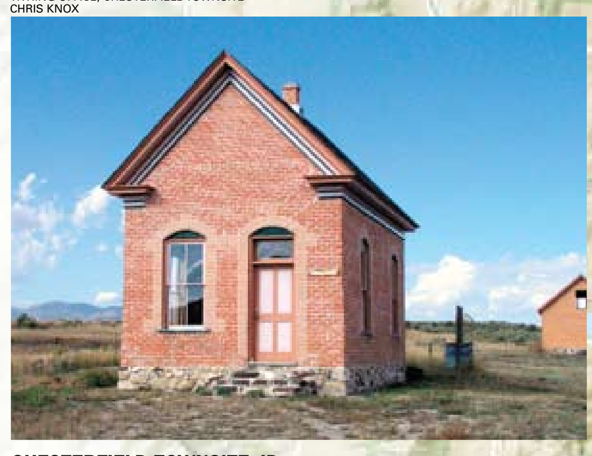
ABSAROKA-BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS, MT
Travel on foot or horseback in this million-acre expanse of craggy peaks above high plateaus dotted with glacial lakes. Consider hiring a guide in this wilderness.

CATTLE DRIVE NEAR BIG TIMBER, MT
KWOK WING KEUNG

MONTANA BUNKHOUSES WORKING RANCH VACATIONS
Whoa, dudes! These are real, working cattle ranches where you might have to fix fences or ride herd to earn your campfire beans. Mosey on over to www.montanaworkingranches.com.

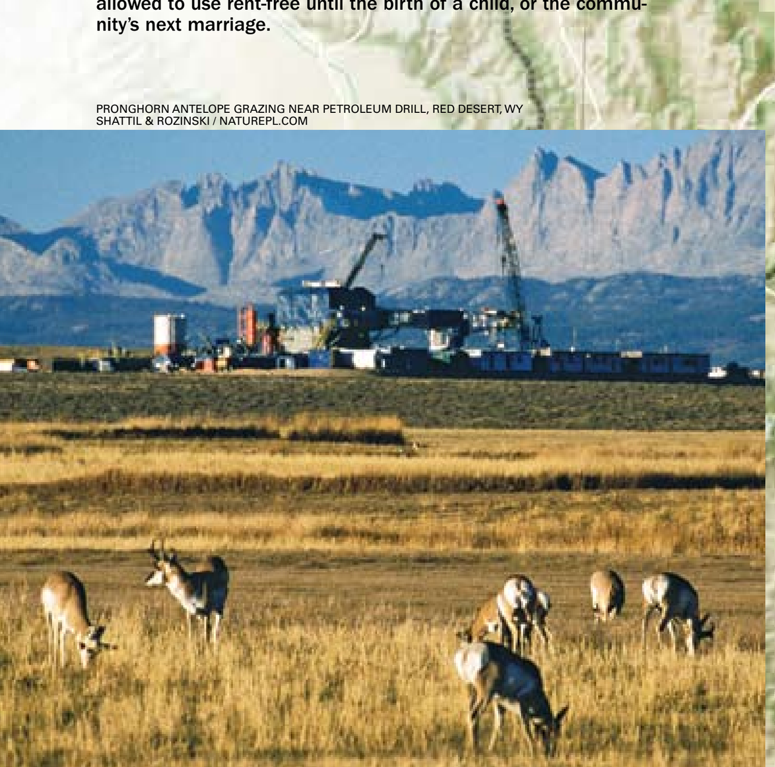
STATE LINE TRAIL OVERLOOKING BIGHORN CANYON, MT AND WY
SUZANNE MORSTAD / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

BIGHORN CANYON NATIONAL RECREATION AREA, MT and WY
Yellowtail Dam transformed the Bighorn River from a muddy flatland stream into a cold tail-water fishery for brown and rainbow trout. The upstream reservoir offers 55 miles of deep-canyon navigation.



TITHING OFFICE, CHESTERFIELD TOWNSITE
CHRIS KNOX

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSITE, ID
Lovingly resurrected by modern Latter-day Saints, this Mormon settlement flourished astride the Oregon Trail from 1880 to 1920. The spare, elegant architecture includes the Meeting House, the Tithing Office, and the Honeymoon House, which newlyweds were allowed to use rent-free until the birth of a child, or the community's next marriage.



PRONGHORN ANTELOPE GRAZING NEAR PETROLEUM DRILL, RED DESERT, WY
SHATTIL & ROZINSKI / NATUREPL.COM

WINDSURFER, BUFFALO BILL STATE PARK, NEAR CODY, WY
WADE MCKOY / FOCUSPRODUCTIONS.COM

BUFFALO BILL STATE PARK
Buffalo Bill Scenic Byway parallels the North Fork of the Shoshone from Yellowstone to Buffalo Bill State Park, where the river disappears into a vast reservoir. Wind-surfers, paddlers, and anglers enjoy the wide-open water behind Buffalo Bill Dam, which visitors may cross on foot, 350 feet above the floor of the downstream canyon.

Landscape Changes and Challenges

"The biggest challenge to wildlife here will be global warming. The numbers I've seen say the western U.S. could lose half its wild trout habitat by the end of this century. That would be devastating for fishing, local economies, and the whole ecology of the place. Grizzlies won't make it without fish, and Yellowstone without grizzlies is hard to imagine."

—Craig Matthews, fly shop owner, Blue Ribbon Flies, West Yellowstone, MT

"Three years ago, you couldn't see any drilling rigs from town. That's all changed now. We have to get the balance right between wilderness, recreation, and natural gas development. Last winter, we had four ozone alerts here, and that helped wake people up to what we could be losing."

—Mindi Crabb, Pinedale, WY

"Lots of people think of sagebrush drylands as expendable. Yet, sage grouse depend on these areas, which also provide indispensable food and cover for mule deer, pronghorn, wild birds, and rodents. Fire keeps competing plants from crowding out sagebrush, but it's getting harder to allow natural fires to burn when we have to protect all the homes that border public lands. That's a big reason sagebrush is one of the most threatened habitats in Wyoming."

—Jerry Altermatt, Wyoming Game and Fish habitat biologist, Cody, WY

Wyoming Forever West™ www.WyomingTourism.org
MONTANA VISITMT.COM
IDAHO www.visitidaho.org

National Geographic and the people of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming present this Geotourism MapGuide to the Greater Yellowstone region.

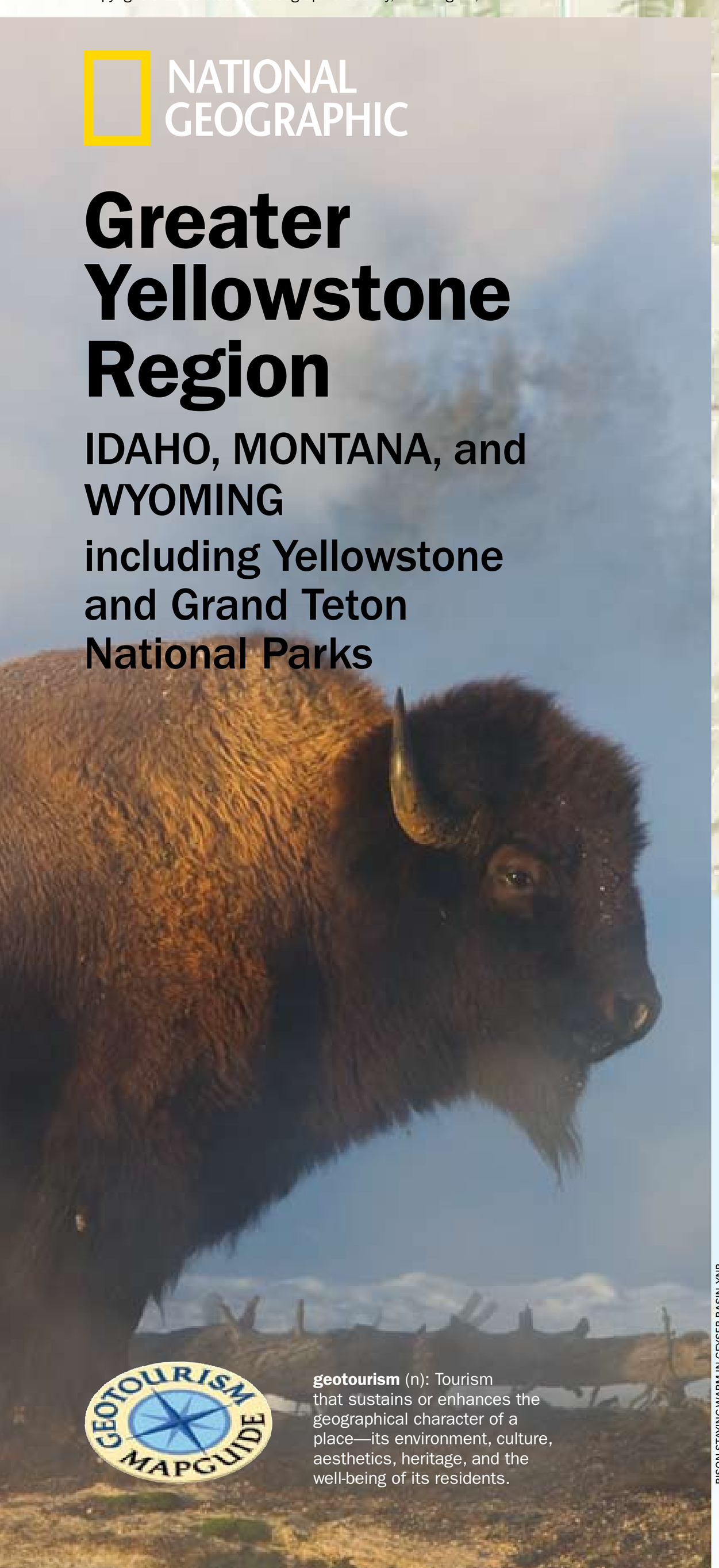
Lead project partners include the National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations, National Geographic Maps, and the Greater Yellowstone Geotourism Stewardship Council, with regional coordination provided by Greater Yellowstone Coalition and the Yellowstone Business Partnership.

We gratefully acknowledge funding support from the following: Bureau of Land Management; Greater Yellowstone Coalition; Idaho Division of Tourism Development; National Park Service; Travel Montana and its partners, Yellowstone Country tourism region and the Bozeman, Big Sky, and West Yellowstone Convention and Visitor Bureaus; United States Forest Service; and Wyoming Travel and Tourism.

Text by Michele Archie, author; Tom Miller, editor. Map notes by David Thomas

Visit **www.yellowstonegeotourism.net** to learn more about the Greater Yellowstone region.

Copyright © 2009 National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.



BISON STAYING WARM IN GEYSER BASIN, YNP
JEFF VANUGA

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Greater Yellowstone Region

IDAHO, MONTANA, and WYOMING
including Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks

GEOTOURISM MAPGUIDE

geotourism (n): Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

Fish Story

The Yellowstone River flows right down the block from where I live. You can float it in big wooden boats, or in rubber rafts with a bunch of people. I have a small sturdy boat the size of a truck tire. It has no real floor except for the seat, so when you pull over to a shallow spot you can stand up and fish.

Trout fishing is very big here. In the Yellowstone, you have your choice of introduced brown, rainbow, or the native cutthroat trout. Cutthroats have red slash marks under the jaws; they look like their throats have been cut. Since "cuts" are relatively rare and out-competed by introduced trout, your conscientious fisherman will always release the natives. Smaller creeks have brook trout. The brookies eat a lot of fresh water crustaceans and, to my taste, have a richer flavor than big river trout.

In July, after the runoff, a certain kind of large bug, the salmon fly, hatches on the river. It's a good time to fish for big trout. The trick is to match the hatch—see what manner of insect is presently completing its life cycle and floating on the surface. Then tie a dry fly replica on your line and cast for a fish that is rising and eating those insects. That's right: you're matching wits with an animal whose brain is the size of a fingernail clipping. Still, there's really nothing much more thrilling than catching the precise fish you're casting to on a properly chosen dry fly.

—Tim Cahill, author, Livingston, MT

SNOWSHOEING IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK, WY
FRED PFLUGHOFT, COURTESY OF WYOMING TRAVEL & TOURISM

FISHING ON THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER NEAR LIVINGSTON, MT
BOB & ESTELA ALLEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Four Season Recreation

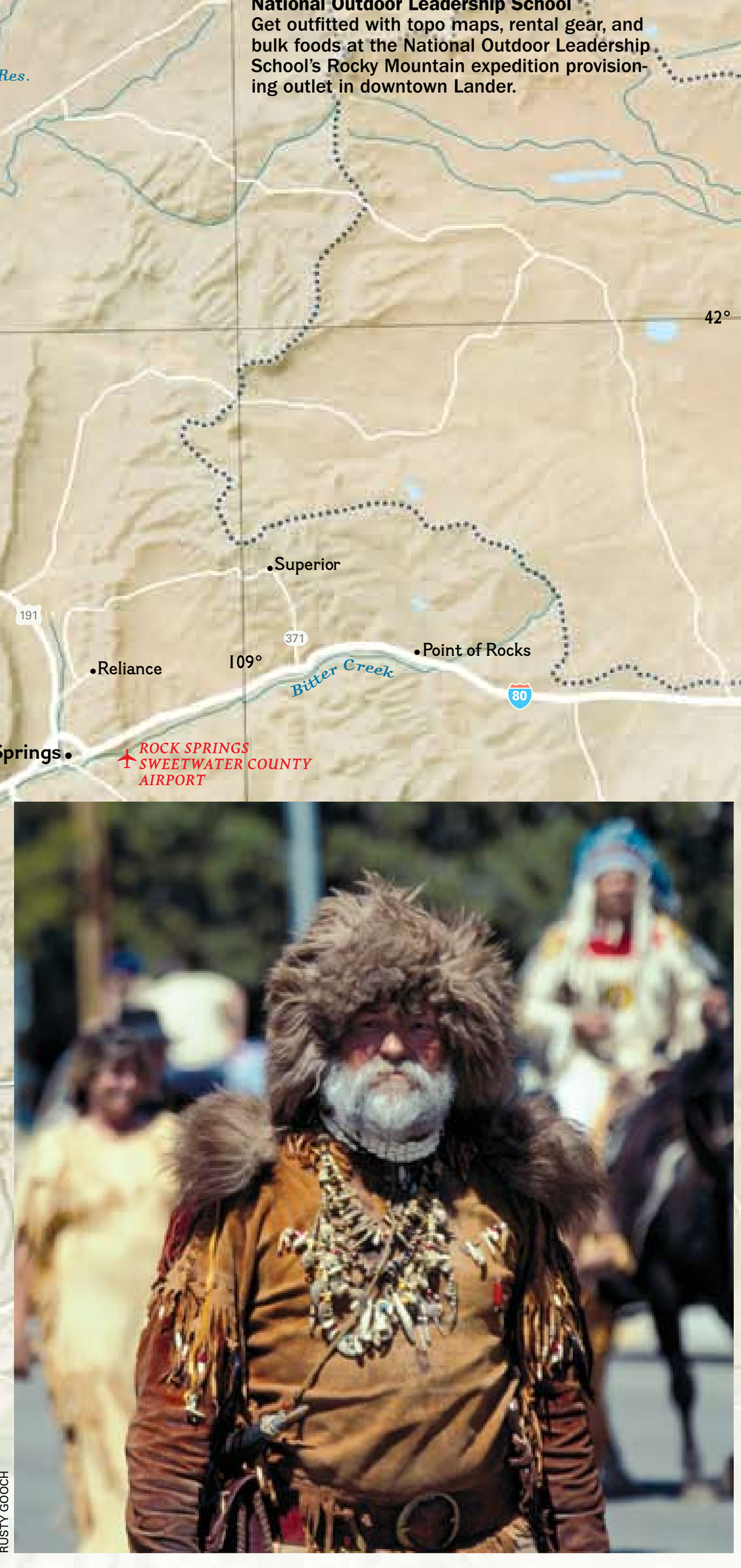
From scenic drives to extreme ice climbing, you'll find outdoor recreation for every season and every body. It's never far to the nearest trailhead, trout stream, or ski area.

"Exploring wild places, our cardinal responsibility is to connect, learn, and appreciate. My young daughter and I spent one tent-bound night blindly trying to decipher sounds of thundering hooves and splashing. Morning showed the lakeshore riddled with tracks. Mama moose and calf had taken refuge in the lake while wolves chased along the shore. My daughter still talks about the night the moose outsmarted the wolves."

—Thomas Turiano, author and mountain guide, Wilson, WY

"In the 1930s, fly fishing in Montana was exotic. Today we have fly rod manufacturers, fly tyers, guides, lodges, second homes, and a lot of interest in healthy rivers, all stemming from the confluence of world-class trout streams and enterprising people who saw fly fishing as another way to make a living in our remote communities."

—Kris Hauck, owner, El Western Cabins and Lodges, Ennis, MT



MOUNTAIN MAN AT THE GREEN RIVER RENDEZVOUS PARADE, PINEDALE, WY
RUSTY GOOCH

Mountain Men

"In the early 1800s, mountain men like Jedediah Smith and John Colter fired Americans' imaginations about the vast western territory. The exploits of these free-roaming fur trappers were legendary. Though their era faded by the early 1840s, their paths can sometimes be detected in place-names that honor them — like the Snake River's Henrys Fork, named for trapper Andrew Henry, who spent the winter of 1810 hunkered down along its banks."

—Nancy Stratford, Island Park Historical Society president, Island Park, ID

"The 19th century rendezvous began as a vehicle for trappers and traders to meet up, and exchange furs for provisions. Our modern rendezvous continues the tradition of showing off skills, swapping stories, and having a good time—while protecting 100 acres of the historical site of the 1838 rendezvous. We try to emulate the situation as it would have been in mountain man days, down to hand-stitched clothing, muzzle loading firearms, and tomahawk-throwing competitions."

—John Boesch, 1838 Rendezvous Association, Riverton, WY

HIKING IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK, WY
BETH WALD / AURORA PHOTOS

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK
Named by French-speaking fur traders, the Teton Range rises abruptly alongside Wyoming's western boundary. Paddlers ripple the reflections of snow-tipped mountain peaks, backpackers overnight in bear country, and photographers stalk grazing elk and pronghorn antelope. The Tetons were protected and appended to Yellowstone as a separate national park in 1929.

Festivals & Events

International Pedigree Stage Stop Sled Dog Race various, WY (*January or February*) This race across Wyoming into Utah is the largest in the lower 48. Its "stage stop" format allows for a stop in a different town each night, where activities may include games, carnivals, and fireworks. **www.wyomingstagestop.org**

American Dog Derby Ashton, ID (*mid-February*) Historic dog sled race that runs from Ashton, Idaho to Yellowstone Park. Five different races are offered plus a host of other activities including a snowshoe race and a weight pull in which spectators and their dogs compete. **www.americandogderby.org**

The Brewery Follies Virginia City, MT (*May through September*) A risque contemporary cabaret act in Montana's first brewery, the H.S. Gilbert Brewery. **www.breweryfollies.net**

Cody Nite Rodeo and Stampede Cody, WY (*June through August*) For 90 nights Cody hosts the Rodeo, a fun event for the rodeo lover, highlighted by the Kids' Calf Scramble for children. Many of the top competitors take part in the prestigious Buffalo Bill Cody Stampede held in early July. **www.codystampederodeo.com**

Plains Indian Museum Powwow Cody, WY (*3rd weekend in June*) Celebration of family, tradition, and the culture of the people of the Plains. This colorful and vibrant Powwow includes a learning tipi for children, dance competitions, music, and arts and crafts. **www.bbhc.org/Events/powwow.cfm**

Eastern Shoshone Indian Days Fort Washakie, WY (*last weekend in June*) Wyoming's largest powwow invites people to gather from throughout North America. Visitor's can experience traditional dances, drum contests, a parade, food, and crafts. **www.easternshoshone.net/IndianDays.html**

Teton Valley Summer Festival Driggs, ID (*week of July 4*) Four days of art and craft shows, hot air balloon rides, breakfasts, contests, parades, and much more. **www.tetonvalleychamber.com**

Pioneer Days Parade and Rodeo Lander, WY (*July 3 and 4*) In its 114th year, this event remains the world's oldest paid rodeo. Other activities include a barbeque, parade, and fireworks display. **www.landerchamber.org/annualevents.aspx**

Mountain Man 1838 Rendezvous Riverton, WY (*Wednesdays, July to September*) Celebrating the original 1838 rendezvous site this event, through traditional competitions, reenactments, and seminars, encourages novices to share the experience of life during the trapper's era. **www.1838rendezvous.com**

Green River Rendezvous Pageant Pinedale, WY (*2nd weekend in July*) Relives history with pageants, parades, local food and crafts, demonstrations, Sunday prairie mass, and a rodeo. **www.meetmeonthegreen.com**

Shoshone-Bannock Indian Festival Fort Hall, ID (*2nd weekend in August*) A traditional gathering complete with food, crafts, special performances, and thousands of people from all over North America competing in singing and dance competitions. **www.shoshonebannocktribes.com/festival**

Crow Fair Crow Agency, MT (*3rd weekend in August*) Large gathering of the Crow or Apsáalooke Nation, renowned internationally for their horsemanship and beadwork, who have lived in this region since the 1700s. Highlights include a parade, rodeo, dancing, horse races, and a powwow. **www.crow-fair.com**

Great Montana Sheep Drive Reed Point, MT (*September*) Highlighted by the running of hundreds of locally-bred sheep down main street, this event also features a parade, rides, and a dance. **visitmt.com/whatsnew/features/sheepishfun.htm**

Rabbitstick Rexburg, ID (*3rd week in September*) The largest and oldest primitive skills gathering in the United States, filled with dozens of workshops followed by musical entertainment. **www.backtracks.net**

Bridger Raptor Festival Bozeman, MT (*October*) Dedicated to promoting a greater understanding of local wildlife, centered around the largest known golden eagle migration in the United States. Activities include a wildlife film festival, nature walks, and entertainment for the entire family. **www.bridgerraptorfest.org**

Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival Jackson Hole, WY (*early October*) Encourages the production of natural history programming around the world through the exploration of new technology. Celebrates the world's finest examples of wildlife filmmaking through its film competition. **www.jhfestival.org**

Heart of the West Invitational Art Show and Sale Lander, WY (*mid-October*) The show attracts some of the best artists from Wyoming as well as out of state. Held over two days, events include a wine and scotch tasting, cowboy gear exhibition, auction, and patron's ball. **www.landerchamber.org/heartofthewesthome.aspx**